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NEWSLETTER

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Located in the ChermSIDE Historical Precinct at 61 Kittyhawk Drive, ChermSIDE but DO NOT send post to this address.

Hail and Farewell

Elsie Turner, wife of Adrian, died peacefully aged 94 years after a long illness and was buried in Pinnaroo Cemetery on Tuesday 27th May, 2008. The family was with her when she died and supported Adrian who is still recovering from a broken hip and surgery. RIP.

Hail and Farewell

Thomas Packer, a long standing member of the Society, died aged 84 after a long illness. Tom was a descendant of two of ChermSIDE's early settlers, Joseph Packer (Tanner) and Andrew Hamilton (Carriage Builder) and was the first dentist in Kedron. He practiced there for many years living behind the surgery on Gympie Road and moving to Aspley in 1956h.

He was a foundation member of Rotary ChermSIDE, the ChermSIDE History Society and a prominent member of the Uniting Church of Aspley. He contributed a great deal of material to our archives including many photos as well as a copy of the History of Aspley Methodist Church which he wrote.

Tom will be remembered by the many people who were patients. Some people who are now well past middle age first met Tom when they were children and remained with him as adult patients. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, a daughter, two sons, grandchildren and great grandchildren. RIP

David Jones author of "Wings on the River" spoke at the June meeting on the Flying Boat Era in Brisbane and Redland Bay 1920-1970.

In the pre WWII era flying boats were the safest, most reliable and the most luxurious form of air transport available. Brisbane was ideally suited for them as they could 'land' and take off right in the middle of the city.

The city workers could see them landing and taking off, while they ate their lunch or looked from the office window. Crowds would come to see the spectacle of the spray flying as the great airplanes skimmed across the water with motors roaring at full throttle. This was the future of aviation, or so they thought at the time.

There were problems, such as having to dodge the Bulimba Ferry which had to run on schedule and other ships plying the river. Also the planes had to have a clear run, or swim, of several miles to take off, while landing only took a short run as the water acted as a break.

The Short Empire Flying Boat used by Qantas was designed for the Australia Britain run. These ships of the air had plenty of room inside with sleeping berths for their 16 passengers and space for 1.5 tons of mail as cargo. Qantas bought two of them, the Cooee and Coolangatta, for the first flight in July 1938 with their terminal at Pinkenba.

With the outbreak of war in 1939 the Qantas fleet was put on a war service footing and civilian services were greatly reduced; of the 10 planes that went to war only one survived.

When General Macarthur set up his

Headquarters in the AMP Chambers in Brisbane special flights, using flying boats, were commenced direct from California to Brisbane. There were about 10 flights per week making a stopover in Pearl Harbour and carrying military personnel and equipment for the General. A temporary terminal was established at Colmslie on the south bank of the river opposite the Hamilton wharves. This arrangement lasted for about two years until land based planes took over the run.

In the post war period a Catalina base was operating out of Rose Bay in Sydney Harbour and servicing Lord Howe Island, Noumea, Fiji, the New Hebrides, Rabaul and the east coast of Australia. These planes called at Brisbane landing in the Hamilton Reach with a terminal at the Hamilton wharves.

Stewart Middlemiss, a wartime pilot of Catalinas, saw the possibility of ferrying tourists to the Barrier Reef from Brisbane. In 1947 he founded Barrier Reef Airways, bought eight Catalinas and used the US base at Colmslie as a terminal. Of the eight planes he used two for flying and the other six for spare parts. The system worked well and he along with another pilot, Frank Kelly, never missed a service through weather in the time they operated.

The small airline always had financial difficulties and at one stage tried to avoid paying landing fees to the Dept of Civil Aviation. They argued that since they didn't land on airfields they should be exempt from the fees. The Dept changed the name from landing fees to route fees; Barrier Reef kept on paying.

Reg Ansett, who taught Middlemiss to fly before the war, chartered Barrier Reef's only flying 'Cat' for a round trip to the Whitsundays to see for himself their tourist potential. He was impressed with Hayman Island and eventually bought it and developed it into a world class tourist resort by 1950.

Ansett then bought Sandringham Flying Boats for Barrier Reef Airlines and later bought the whole company. It continued to operate under its name but was finally absorbed into Ansett Transport Industries.

In the meantime the problem of sharing the Brisbane River with larger ships was becoming more acute and resulted in a couple of serious accidents. While no person was injured, the planes suffered damage and a change of base was imperative.

The base was moved to Redland Bay in 1953 where there was little sea traffic and the surrounding islands sheltered the flight path. There was one drawback; the base was 26 miles from Brisbane.

The new base was very busy in the tourist season from May to October but quiet for the remainder of the year. Ansett moved much of his work to Rose Bay and moved further into land based planes. By 1957 Redland Bay was only maintained as an emergency base for the declining number of flying boats. By 1961 the only flight left for the flying boats was to Lord Howe Island with the final flight on 25th Oct 1971 when the base closed.

So ended the era of the flying boats, which for a time, looked like those graceful machines were set to take over flying. Children's books of the 1930s used to show highly coloured pictures of cities of the future with the flying boats prominently displayed. Some even predicted floating cities serviced by these planes. Maybe their time may come again, maybe.

Found, the Missing 19,287 Chermsiders who vanished in 1975 due to a change of Boundaries.

On the 29th May 2008 the Australian Bureau of Statistics gave me a map photocopied from the 1971 census maps which showed the boundaries of old Chermside. I had been looking in the wrong direction, towards the west where West Chermside is located and neglecting the east where much of the population of old Chermside finished up.

The pre 1975 area of Chermside was 15.6km² but was reduced to 3.4km² after 1975. The greater part of Chermside was divided up amongst the following suburbs enlarging their area by the accompanying percentages:

Aspley was enlarged by 10%; Geebung 20%; Wavell Heights 66%; Nundah 10%; Woolloowin 3%; Kedron 25%; Stafford Heights 20%; Chermside West 90% leaving the present Chermside with between a quarter and a fifth of its original area. That accounts for the population of Chermside dropping from 26,953 in 1971 to 7,666 in 1976; to about a quarter of the previous population.

Wavell Heights High School Reunion will be held on 4th April 2009. This is an early notice for people to get ready and put the date in their TO-

DO file. For details our liaison officer is Brian Tilley.

Toowoomba Bus Trip – Sunday 14th September – need names ASAP.

History of Chermside State School – we still have copies of the book \$25 + \$5 postage in Aust.

Wallace St. Research Project

At the July meeting of the Society, instead of having a visiting speaker we discussed the history of Wallace St and examined the material that members had gathered.

Carol Cunningham and Caroline Bowser showed us the photos they have taken of the street as it is now. They photographed each house and apartment block individually, recording numbers, names, descriptions and any other relevant data. This record of the current situation was done over several visits and is now gathered in a folder so that any future changes can be recorded. As soon as it was done it became history recorded in photographs.

Brian Tilley, born in 1948, has drawn a map of Wallace St showing the building blocks as they appeared in the 1940s & 1950s when he was a boy growing up there. Drawing on his own memory and that of his relatives, some of whom lived in the street, he identified the original housing blocks by their street numbers and the names of the occupants from Gympie Rd to Davenport St. He describes the street:

The street itself was not exceptional, leading from the tram lines of Gympie Road and ending in the quiet paddocks where the Prince Charles Hospital now stands. It comprised a strip of rough bitumen just wide enough for two cars of the period, together with strips of dusty road material up to the gutters on either side. Of slight interest to children of my age was the presence, in the bitumen mix, of Iron Pyrites (Fools Gold) which was collected and hoarded.

The Tilley's house, No 16 built in 1948 in the early part of the post WWII house building boom, was brand new but the houses from it to Gympie Rd were older. On the south corner of Gympie Rd was O'Hara's hardware store and on

the north corner was the home of George Lemke Jr, a butcher and son of a butcher.

In addition to these two families, Brian locates the houses of the following families on his map:

Nuttle, Stevens, Bliss, Rev Burnett, Robertson, Brooks, Thompson, Johnson, Burns, Arkinstall, two Tilley families and two Jolly families.

On the south side of the map is shown a large paddock where cows were kept and milked by Mrs Stanton who lived in Gympie Rd. What is now known as Somerset Creek flowed through this area and across Gympie Rd in what was known as Dead Man's Gully, now Abarth St. From what I have been told the name Somerset Creek is a new name, probably given by the Council in recent years.

Another map maker is Mavis Rye who is drawing the Wallace St scene of the 1930-45 era. Mavis is still working on the map. A preliminary sketch shows the following families:

Hardaker's shop, Richardson, Rev Grayson (1951-61), Joe Kelly, Holoway, Les Smith, Bill Beirne, Mrs Williamson, Lanhams, Wally Burton

A third mapmaker of the 1940-50 era is Gavin Argo who lists more families:

George Law, two houses owned by Jim Anderson, Mooney, Tylers, Williams, Burton, Viv Anderson,

Other notes recorded at the meeting:

According to the street directories Wallace St did not exist in 1924 but appears in 1926. There was only a wheel track on the other side of Gympie Rd which became Duff St and later, Kuran St. (Joan Hamilton), Farnell St did not exist in the 1930s (Mavis Rye)

In the early days of the street there were no house numbers and each house was named, Thompson's house was Glen Ray; so when were the numbers introduced?

Rev Burnett followed by Rev Grayson lived in the street in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. John Picescki, a Frenchman, who had won the Croix de Guerre, lived in the street and he used to go France each year for Bastille Day. (Mr Arkinstall?) Darryl Brownman lived near the entrance to Prince Charles – used to do advertisements for Lowes. Also E. Tyler was mentioned.

Beverley Isdale has collected 10 pages of names from CSS Register and Electoral Rolls

which need to be analysed into years of occupancy as far as it is possible.

The origin of the street name is unknown but a Margaret Wallace, the widow of Robert who died in 1866, inherited a block of land in the vicinity which was valued at \$30. (Source)

The Next Stage

So, as you can see, we are in the early stages of collecting information on this street. What we need is more information from you, dear readers, who may have some, no matter how small, pieces of information to let us know now.

Even if you think that your information is insignificant, still let us know because when we fit all the bits and pieces together it may be an important link. This is very much like a jigsaw in which 80% of the pieces are missing, so we need all the help we can get.

Preliminary Observation

One of the researchers remarked that it seems that something like 80% of the houses in the street have been replaced by blocks of units. Note: Will someone volunteer to check this by doing a count?

This change will make it virtually impossible to find the names of the present occupants **of the street**. In the earlier days when families lived in houses on separate blocks and walked to the tram, everybody knew everybody else. People chatted and children played; it was a different lifestyle, a much more local style of living, few cars and a lot of bikes.

The Libraries of Cherm-side

The first library was started in the old Protestant Alliance Hall in 1898 but little is known about it. At that time a public meeting decided to form the Downfall Creek Recreation Club and Library but only the earliest minutes survive.

The next library, or the continuation of the above library, was formed when the Cherm-side School of Arts was formed in 1909. Regular purchases of books were made, some new, some second hand. The growth of the library is paralleled by the growth in education; as more people learned to read so the demand for books grew.

The minutes indicate that the stock of books grew slowly, probably because the village was small and the demand was not great. Round numbers are quoted indicating the use of estimates, as actual numbers are mostly in precise numbers. By 1952 when the School of Arts closed and Brisbane City Council took over there

were 1,000 books. In addition to the book stock was a reading room supplied with newspapers and magazines with a few reference books such as a dictionary and a bible. At one stage in the interwar period copies of Hansard were stocked.

After the Brisbane City Council was given control the library remained in the old School of Arts building and lending continued as the **first Cherm-side Municipal Library**.

The Second Municipal Library opened 20th March 1958 with a 300 sq metre library complex, built on the site of the old School of Arts and costing £13,000 (\$288, 800 in 2004 values), was officially opened by the Lord Mayor Ald T R Groom. The old School of Arts building had been shifted back and was demolished in about 1980 for a car park.

The new library contained 11,000 books of which 4,000 were for children. This huge expansion was due to the greater financial and professional resources available to the Council.

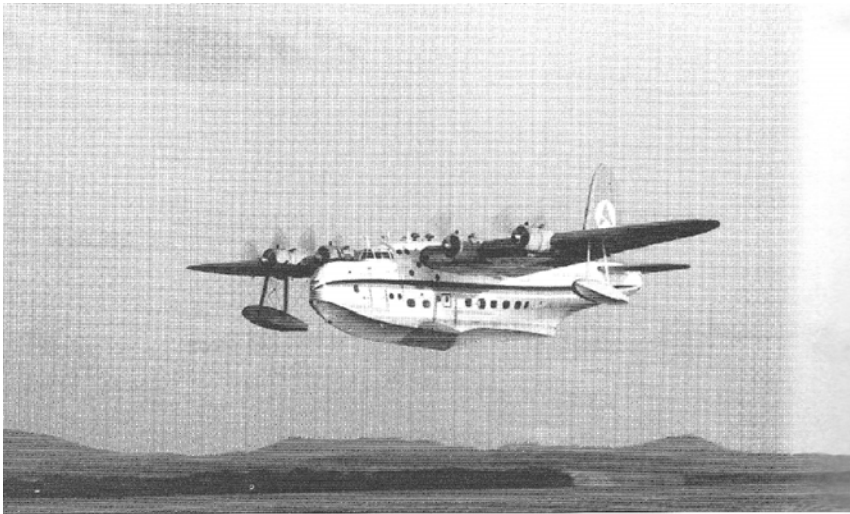
The Third Municipal Library, costing \$2.7 m, opened on Friday 17/1/1997 on the Cr of Kittyhawk Drive & Hamilton Rd by Lord Mayor, Jim Soorley. The building itself covers approximately 1,500 sq meters, which is the size of a 50 perch block of land, and is five times bigger than the previous library.

As at 2008 the library holds 85,000 items of which 80,000 are books in the reference and lending sections, the remaining 5,000 items are Audio Visual, Multi Media, Compact Disks, Video tapes, Digital Video Disks, Audio Disks. The latest addition is the facility which allows members to download books from the BCC Library computers into their personal MP3 players.

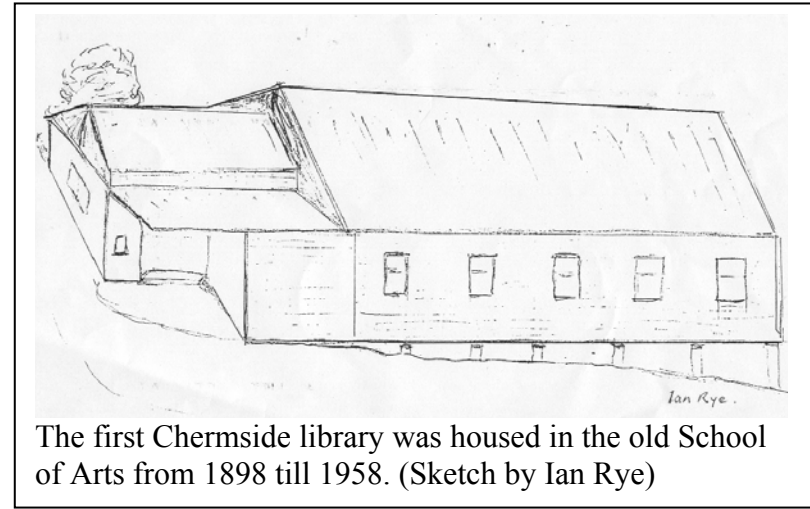
Members have access to over 1 million items which can be ordered via the internet from any of the 32 libraries in the citywide system. This is the library of the 21st Century in which the early founders would have rejoiced.

There was still one thing missing from the old School of Arts, a meeting place. This was remedied when **the Cherm-side Hub** costing \$2m was opened on 20/3/2004 by the Lord Mayor, Cr Tim Quinn.

This addition consisted of two fully electronically equipped meeting rooms, a small kitchenette, a coffee shop, an open veranda dining area and library extension; an addition of 500 sq metres which brings the total library area up to 2,000 sq metres. The Coffee Shop is leased to Kedron-Wavell Services Club which works closely with the Library.



Islander flies low in salute as she makes the final flying boat departure from Redland Bay on 25 October 1971. (photo courtesy John Wilson)



The first Chermside library was housed in the old School of Arts from 1898 till 1958. (Sketch by Ian Rye)



In 1997 the present library was opened in this larger building which was necessary to house the much larger collection of books and electronic equipment.



The first purpose built library in Chermside opened in 1958 in front of the old School of arts which is shown behind the new library. By 1997 it was closed and today is a one stop paint shop while the old School of Arts was demolished in C1980.